

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SAB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5171

INFO PANCANAL

USCINCSO

UNCLAS PANAMA 5770

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PN, CU

SUBJECT: TRIP TO CUBA BY PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

REF: PANAMA 5487

1. PRO-GOP "MATUTINO" FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, CONTAINS SMALL BOX ON FRONT PAGE ANNOUNCING THAT PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF CORREGIMIENTO REPRESENTATIVES DR. RAUL E. CHANG DEPARTED THAT DAY FOR 15-DAY STAY IN CUBA AT INVITATION OF CUBAN GOVERNMENT. CHANG WILL BE ACCOMPANIED TO HAVANA BY HIS WIFE AND TWO OTHER CORREGIMIENTO REPRESENTATIVES, JULIO CESAR QUINTANA (DARIEN) AND PLINIO COGLEY (HERRERA).

2. OCCASION FOR ANNOUNCEMENT OF TRIP (BY PRESS OFFICE FOR NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION) WAS FORMAL SWEARING-IN OF EUGENIO DELGADO, VICE PRESIDENT OF NACR FROM COLON PROVINCE, AS TEMPORARY PRESIDENT OF NACR IN CHANG'S ABSENCE.

3. PURPOSE OF TRIP NOT STATED IN ARTICLE.

COMMENT: CHANG IS KNOWN AS MODERATE CONSERVATIVE AND ONE OF PERSONS IN GOP WHO HAS FAVORED CONTINUATION PANAMA'S GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA. WHETHER CUBANS UNCLASSIFIED

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ARE DELIBERATELY SEEKING TO CULTIVATE MODERATES IN GOP OR SOME

OTHER REASON EXISTS FOR CHANG'S VISIT IS NOT YET KNOWN. AS
REPORTED REFTEL, GOP HAS ANNOUNCED THAT TORRIJOS WILL MAKE TRIP
TO CUBA,BUT HAS ANNOUNCED NO DATE AS YET. POSSIBLY ONE PURPOSE
OF CHANG'S TRIP IS TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THIS VISIT. IF SO,
WE MIGHT EXPECT ANNOUNCEMENT OF DATE FO TORRIJOS TRIP AT
APPROPRIATE TIME AFTER CHANG'S RETURN, I.E, SOMETIME AFTER OCT
3, WHEN FESTIVITIES LEADING UP TO OCTOBER 11TH CELEBRATION WILL
HAVE BEGUN. END COMMENT.
JORDEN

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